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COUNTY-COURT SUITS.

THE establishment of county courts, the popularity and usefulness of which have increased in a steady ratio during the last few years, has greatly simplified litigation, though inasmuch as it has brought the luxury of law within the reach of the humblest classes, it has rendered recourse to legal decisions much more common and frequent among them than it used to be. There is in this no matter for regret, because the general tendency among litigants of the lower order is to rest satisfied with the decree of the judge; and thus a great deal of heart-burning and ill-will is avoided or put an end to. Thousands of small differences, which might else grow into serious and lasting quarrels, are settled every month by the county-court judge; and there can be no doubt that among those with whom they originate, the cause of peace and quietness is thus largely benefited. Another result, which is not by any means so desirable, is the notion, which has obtained among litigants of the lower orders, that the county court is peculiarly *their* court, established for the vindication of their claims and privileges, rather than for the general dispensation of justice. In London, this feeling is extremely common—it influence and operation are patent every court-day, and we have failed to discover that any attempt is made to check it on the part of the authorities. It probably arose in the beginning from the success of needy suitors in obtaining speedy and summary justice, and from their recognition of the extreme care, patience, and painstaking investigation practised by the judges in order to insure their getting it. Such suitors are keen enough in discovering who are their friends, and they must be blind indeed not to see that wherever they have right on their side, the judge is sure to vindicate their cause. This notion of theirs, however, often leads them into silly suits resulting in defeat and loss; and by experiences of an unsuccessful kind, it is to be hoped that they will learn to disabuse themselves of their error.

It is not easy to discover any settled principle which governs verdicts in these courts. According to our observation from time to time, it would seem that equity prevails over law—that different ideas as to equity prevail at different courts—and that precedents are of little or no account whatever. In cases where a suit is instituted for the recovery of sums said to be due for labour done, and withheld by the defendant on the ground that the labour was ill done, and therefore worthless—different courts will be found to follow different rules. In No. 1, for instance, the defendant who refuses to pay, on the plea that he contracted for efficient labour, or he would not have

contracted at all, and who produces a witness to prove that the labour done was inefficient, and had to be done over again by a competent person—such a defendant will get a verdict; but in No. 2, the plaintiff who has performed the labour, however inefficiently, will be successful, on the ground that it was the business of the employer to ascertain his competency before employing him—the judge holding that if the workman's time is occupied on behalf of an employer, he must be paid for it. These peculiarities are well known to those whose interests they affect, and in consequence, No. 1 rarely has a case of the kind brought before him, while No. 2 is overwhelmed with them.

Some years ago, a certain suburban court was almost monopolised by servant-girls, who brought suits, and gained them, against their mistresses, who had discharged them suddenly. Their claims were invariably for a month's wages. It came out at length that a pleasant and profitable game was carried on among them—the girls hiring themselves for service on the condition of a month's notice or a month's wages previous to discharge, and then provoking an immediate discharge by some unbearable outrage, in order to recover the wages for which they had rendered no sort of service, by the action of the county court. This practice, of course, came to a sudden end as soon as their tactics were discovered.

Although the majority of county-court cases are determined without the aid of lawyers, the parties making their own statements, and leaving the result to the judge, a contrary practice is becoming daily more popular. In London, and in other large towns, many members of the legal profession practise in the county courts, and not a few have devoted themselves entirely to this branch of business. We are of opinion that the litigating parties would best consult their own interest by dispensing with the lawyer and his fee, and trusting their cause to the sole consideration of the judge. We say this, not out of any disrespect to the poor man's lawyer, but with reference to facts of a very ugly description, of which we shall say nothing here, but which will suggest themselves to many readers whose tastes or avocations may have led them from time to time within the county-court precincts on court-days.

Occasionally, some suit of a whimsical or grotesque character turns up in these minor courts, which finds no record in the public prints, where all such proceedings are ignored; and we will recite a couple of them, of recent date, but which, as far as we know, have never found a chronicler.

The first scene lies in a court in Central London, where P——, the darling of the city's lieges, sits in

jolly state, begowned, bewigged, and redolent of good-humour as the president of a marriage-feast. Amidst the hubbub and clatter arising from the departure of a crowd of suitors whose business has been settled, and the in-rushing of new ones, the crier bawls out the names of Martha Evans and Nancy Jones. Martha is first to respond, and launches herself with precipitate determination into the box at the right hand of the judge, where she stands like a tall tower, with frowning battlements. The old judge smiles at her under his spectacles, but fails to take the edge off her acid countenance, which turns away from that benignant look, as if the very attempt to soothe her indignation were an injury to be resented. Meanwhile, Nancy is shoved and elbowed forward into the box on the left, and stands shame-faced, and smothering a laugh, confronting her opponent. The oaths being administered, and the statement of the plaintiff made, it comes out that Martha claims seven-and-sixpence from Nancy, as the value of the most beautiful of bonnets, which the said Nancy has carried off from her shop without paying for.

'Well, Nancy,' says the judge, 'what have you to say in answer to this statement of Mrs Evans?'

'She ain't Mrs Evans at all—she ain't nothin' but a hold maid.'

'H'm. Ah! but you see that does not affect her statement about the bonnet. Let us hear what you have to say to that.'

'I never bought ne'er a bonnet of her in my life—that's what I says, yer honour.'

'That there's a perjury falsehood!' explodes Martha, shaking a clenched fist at the delinquent. 'Please your honour, that there's the very bonnet what she got on her ed this blessed minnit. She comes into my shop, and she says to me—she says—'

'Stop, my good woman; I don't want to know what she said to you, just now. I want to hear what she is going to say to me.—Now, Nancy, you say that you never bought a bonnet of Martha Evans.'

'No, yer honour, I never didn't.'

'You mean, of course, you never did.'

'No, I don't (pettishly). I means what I says: I never didn't.'

'You didn't buy a bonnet of her at any time?'

'No, yer honour.'

'But she swears you did.'

Martha. Yes, your honour, I do—and that there's the very bonnet she got on her ed.

Judge. You hear that, Nancy Jones—is that true? Is that the bonnet you have on?

Nancy (Hesitatingly). Well, it air the bonnet, to be sure.

Judge. The bonnet you bought of Martha Evans.

Nancy. No, it ain't—I never bought no bonnet of her in my life, I swear.

Judge. But that bonnet came out of the plaintiff's shop—you don't deny that, young woman, do you?

Nancy. Well, no—I hain't a goin' to deny that.

Judge. Then if you did not buy it, how came it in your possession?

Nancy blushes and titters, and fidgets about in the box, and hangs her head, but utters not a syllable.

Judge. Come, my lass—how came the bonnet in your possession? I must have a straightforward answer to that question.

Nancy (From behind her handkerchief). Well, yer honour, please yer honour, it was Dan Taylor as gave me the bonnet.

Judge (In a loud whisper). Dan Taylor? Eh? What? Swe-e-e-earth?

Nancy nods a curt nod, and bites her handkerchief.

Judge. Oh, oh! Ah, ah! to be sure, to be sure; I see, I see. Ha, ha! we are getting into daylight now. Now, Martha Evans (turning to the plaintiff), mind what you say, and remember you are upon oath. Did Nancy Jones buy the bonnet of you?

Martha. Your honour, she comes into my shop, and asks for to try on the bonnet—she puts it on her ed, and asks the price, which it's dirt cheap, your honour, at seven-and-sixpence, and she walks off with it—and that there's the bonnet, your honour.

'Yes, you have told us that before. But you know she had her young man with her; and now I want to know whether you really sold the bonnet to Nancy Jones or to Dan Taylor.'

It is now Martha's turn to be confused, and she is evidently perplexed for an answer.

'Come, speak out. You must know to whom you sold the bonnet.'

Martha. Well, your honour, Dan Taylor did say as how he was agoin' to pay for it; but he never been near the shop, and haven't a paid a penny.

'Then it is pretty clear that you sold it to Dan Taylor, is it not?'

'But she have got the bonnet on her ed, and is a wearin' of it out.'

'Ah! but if she didn't buy it, you can't sue her for the payment. Now I will tell you what you must do. You must find out this Dan Taylor. I warrant you, if you keep a sharp eye on Nancy Jones, you won't be long in catching Dan. When you have caught him, you bring him to me—and I—I'll make him pay for the bonnet.'

Martha. Will you, your honour? I'll find him out as sure as I'm a living woman.

Judge. To be sure you will. Bring him to me as soon as you like, and I'll make him pay (with a deep growl)—I'll make him pay.

Scene the second is in a county court further east, where marine and nautical differences and 'long-shore squabbles are much mixed up with general commercial matters. The plaintiff in this case is a tailor and outfitter, who has retired from business, and taken up his abode in a romantic villa built close on the margin of the Thames; and the defendant is one Captain Block, an old man-of-war's man, who, after knocking about on the ocean for almost fifty years, came into unexpected possession of a large fortune, which he spends in a characteristic way. Not being able to put up with brick-walls and four-posters, after swinging in a hammock for near half a century, he has built himself a sailing-yacht, and fitted her up as a man-of-war, mounting her with a regular tier of guns, and constituting himself her captain—his crew consisting of a score of well-seasoned old-salts, warranted to be none the worse for any allowance of grog.

It might appear to be one of the most unlikely things in the world that Mr Peter Gander, the quondam tailor, on shore, should ever come into hostile collision with Captain Block afloat; but destiny, which brings more unlikely things to pass, had decreed that this brace of worthies should clash in their several orbits—and thus it came about. The tailor, who, in his pantalooning times, had been hen-pecked by a domineering wife, had been finally delivered from his plague on a certain propitious Easter-Monday; and it had been his amiable practice ever since, to celebrate the anniversary by the explosion of a continuous *feu de joie* from a battery of small cannon erected at the end of his garden, and overlooking the river. The firing and the feasting—for he entertained all his friends on the occasion—were kept up the whole day, and sometimes far into the night, when the reverberating echoes of the tailor's guns would be heard from Blackwall to Gravesend, and even further down.

Now, it happened that Captain Block, cruising on a certain Easter-Monday in that latitude, heard the report of the tailor's guns, and making sail for the battery, soon came alongside, when he piped all hands, cleared the decks for action, and began to return the fire in the approved British fashion, but in a perfectly friendly and harmless way. It was quite

a refresher to Captain Block to smell powder once more, and he was anything but sparing of his blank cartridges; but, lo! in the middle of the invigorating sport, he discovers that the tailor's lubberly crew were loading their guns with pebbles as well as powder, and had shot away a good part of his top-sails, and riddled his flowing bunting. 'Oh, oh!' said the captain, 'if you mean mischief, you lubbers, you shall have a bellyful: gunner, serve out the shot.' Accordingly, the guns were shotted without loss of time, and the captain, taking good aim at the enemy's chimney-stacks, delivered a broadside with such effect, that the bricks and mortar came tumbling down most alarmingly upon the household within. In the midst of the consternation and panic induced by such a shower, old Block jumped into his boat with a dozen of his crew, each armed with a stout rope's end, and pulled ashore. In less time than it takes to record the fact, the whale of the tailor's company were sprawling on the ground, each and all of them furnished with very sufficient reasons for considering themselves thrashed. To the tailor himself, the gallant captain proffered the honourable satisfaction of a gentleman, tendering him on the spot the choice of weapons, either sword or pistol, both of which were promptly produced for his election. Poor Peter Gander looked aghast at these dreadful alternatives, and instead of accepting either, actually swooned away on the lawn amidst his prostrate guests.

'Bear a hand here, bos'n,' said Block; 'heave that live lumber aboard: we'll bring him to, I reckon, between this and blue-water.'

Accordingly, the senseless tailor was lugged into the boat, and carried on board the yacht, which the next minute trimmed her sails to the breeze, and stood down the river.

When Mr Gander came to his senses, he found himself in total darkness, and his nostrils assailed with the smell of bilge-water. He could hear the waves beating against the walls of his prison; he knew by the violent motion of the vessel that she was navigating the open sea; and now he bitterly bemoaned his lot in being carried off by pirates from his native land. All night he lay lamenting and dreading the gloomy fate in reserve for him. In the morning he heard the harsh voice of the captain on the deck above, and shortly after he was hauled out of confinement, and brought before a court-martial sitting in the cabin. There he was arraigned, and put on his defence; but having nothing of any weight to say for himself, he was found guilty of insulting the British flag, and condemned to be hanged at the yard-arm there and then. Here was a horrible finale to his Easter-Monday's jubilations! He sunk to the ground, and would have swooned again but for a timely bath of brine administered from a bucket by the hands of the boatswain. Dripping and horrified, he got on his knees, and begged and prayed for life, promising all sorts of satisfaction to the captain, and confessing himself a miserable sinner. The captain for a long time paid no attention to his distress, but ordered a rope to be slung for the execution of the sentence. At length, however, he thought fit to shew a little commiseration for the offender, and, upon his promise of amendment, commuted the sentence of death into a sentence to be shaved after the equinoctial fashion. Mr Gander was thereupon conducted to the deck, seated on a barrel, lathered with pitch, and delicately shaved with a piece of rusty iron hoop; at the end of which process, he found himself backed into the tub, and soaped over head and ears in salt-water. After this, he was allowed to console himself, as he best could, until the yacht came in sight of land, when sail was made for the nearest port, and poor Peter was set on shore, without a shilling in his pocket, at a fashionable watering-place.

All the above facts came out from the statements and cross-examinations of plaintiff and witnesses, and

we need not say that the meet was made of them by the counsel for the plaintiff, who had summoned the captain for compensation—assessing at fifty pounds the damages in mind and person which he had received. The counsel for the defendant argued, on the other hand, that Peter had deserved all he had got, for having commenced hostilities without provocation. The judge seemed to be very much of this opinion; he decided, however, that although the gallant captain had been unjustifiably assailed, he had retaliated, considering the circumstances, too severely; and he therefore mulcted him in the penalty of five pounds, at the same time refusing the tailor his costs.

T H E S H A W L

SEVENTY years ago, the word 'shawl' held no place in the English language. The thing itself, the warm, convenient, comfortable, durable, and—worn by one who knows how to wear it—most graceful of feminine wrappers, was unknown in the realm of fashion when the great-grandmothers of the present generation moved therein. It is true that the negotiators sent by Tipppo Saib to the French government, when he was meditating that onslaught on the English which ended in his discomfiture and death, left behind them a few Cashmere shawls, as parting gifts to their Parisian acquaintances; but they were regarded as mere costumery curiosities, and put not to their right use, but made to do duty as dressing-gowns and carpets! The ladies are indebted to one General Bonaparte for the beautiful addition to their toilet. His famous Egyptian expedition was the means of introducing the pride of the Indian loom into European society. No sooner had the shawl been adopted by Madame Emile Gaudin, the reigning Parisian beauty, than it became the rage. Two and three thousand francs were cheerfully paid for second-hand cashmeres, that had seen service as turbans on the heads of the Mogul soldiery, girded the supple waists of Bayaderes, or robed the persons of pagan priests; but, then, the excellence of the fabric, and the durability of the dyes, allowed them to be cleaned with impunity. However, as soon as the shawl was fairly established in popularity, the Levant traders took care there should be no lack of new ones, and a large trade was soon opened with India.

The shawl manufacture is supposed to have originated in the valley of Cashmere, but at what date is unknown; but ever since the first British factories were established in India, Cashmere shawls have constituted one of the most valuable branches of commerce. In the time of the Mogul empire, thirty thousand looms were kept busily occupied in Cashmere; under the Afghans, the number fell to eighteen thousand; and at the present time, six thousand looms are adequate to supply the demand for these beautiful products. This great falling off is attributable to many causes, among the most prominent of which were the destruction of the janizaries, and the fall of the dynasties of Cabul and Lucknow.

The material used in this important manufacture is the wool of a variety of the common goat (*Capra hircus*), reared at an elevation of fourteen thousand feet above the level of the sea; the cold dry table-land of Tibet being the only habitat in which the goat yields the peculiar soft wool required. Each goat yields annually about two pounds of woolly hair, half of which is kemp or coarse hair, used for counterpanes and carpets, the remainder being a beautiful, rich, and soft down, which, after being carefully separated from the kemp, fibre by fibre (an operation of such delicacy that one man or woman is occupied twelve hours in preparing one ounce of wool), is washed in rice-starch, and sold at the rate of three rupees' weight for one rupee. There are two colours—one, ashy gray, which is usually woven in its natural hue; the other, white, which of course is easily dyed

—a process jealously guarded by the Hindus, who desire to keep to themselves the secret of the harmonious hues which have baffled all imitators. There have long been established at Delhi and Lahore shawl manufactories under the direction of Cashmerians, but they have not succeeded in equaling the productions at head-quarters, especially in the fineness of the fabric, which the natives attribute to the quality of the water with which the vale of Cashmere is irrigated.

The gold and silver thread used in the embroidery, is chiefly made at Borhampoor, in the Deccan. A piece, purest ore, is beaten into a cylindrical form about the circumference of a thick reed; this is again beaten out in length till it will pass through a hole one-eighth of an inch in diameter; it is then drawn through gradually diminishing orifices, till it is reduced to the thickness of bobbin-thread; and then wound on reels working on pivots, the ends being passed through still finer holes, and affixed to a large reel, which, being set in rapid motion, attenuates the threads still more. The next process is to flatten it on a steel anvil, and, by an ingenious process, cover a silk thread with the beaten-out metal, which thus forms a wire that will not tarnish. It is said that if a lump of silver be gilded before being drawn into wire, it will undergo the hammering, winding, and drawing out, and yet retain its gilding intact.

The Indian looms are of the rudest and most primitive description, the warp being supplied by two sticks, and the woof entirely worked in by hand—a slow and tedious process, but one that admits of an exactness and neatness of finish setting the rivalry of machinery at defiance. The weaver's wages are from three-halfpence to twopence a day—a wage to make one wonder at the value set upon Cashmere shawls, if we did not remember that as many as thirty, or even forty men will expend two years' labour upon a single shawl, and that before it reaches the purchaser, its price has been augmented fifty per cent. by taxation. The borders are made in several pieces sometimes as many as twenty, and afterwards sewn together, so as to form the pattern. Every stitch being worked by hand, is distinct in itself, and may be pulled out without disturbing the remainder—an infallible test of the genuine Indian production.

Shawls are made of various textures, sizes, and forms, adapted to the several markets, the softest and most delicate being saved for export to Turkey. They are commonly made in two sizes, long and square, the first named measuring one hundred and twenty-six inches by forty-four; the latter being from sixty-three to seventy-two inches square. From Cashmere alone there is exported annually an average value of 1,900,000 rupees; and there must be a considerable home demand for the shawls, which was at one time lessened by the importation of English goods, which at first found favour in the eyes of the natives, but sunk speedily in their estimation, when their quality was tested by actual wear. Of late years, the patterns have become more intricate and richer than ever. London is the great European mart, its dealers sending shawls to America, France, Russia, and Turkey in large quantities. China crape-shawls are made entirely of silk, the ground or foundation being manufactured at Nankin, and then forwarded to Canton, to have the pattern embroidered. This is done by two needlemen working together; one passes the silk downwards, while the other from below passes it up, a third workman changing the silk for them when necessary; but how the fastening on and off is performed, is a trade mystery yet preserved by the Chinese.

As a matter of course, the fair sex had not long joined the shawl movement, before British manufacturers attempted to produce something of the same sort—an attempt to which the high prices fetched by the Indian shawls was an irresistible inducement.

The initiative was taken in this case by a Scotch tradeswoman, a Miss Bowie, who had long been engaged in the gold-lace trade. By means of the sewing-needle, and a material spun from the waste made in reeling the finest Italian silk, she made square shawls of simple patterns. Others, taking a hint from the mode of producing the patterns in damask, trained children to insert the coloured yarn with their fingers; but the expense proved so great, that the experiment of thus imitating the works of Cashmere was speedily abandoned. Baffled, but not defeated, the men of Edinburgh still persevered. At length, that part of a loom called a 'lay' was constructed and fitted up with boxes to hold the shuttles and colours required; this was managed by the application of the weaver's left thumb, so that without stopping his loom, he was able to throw in the coloured yarn, and make it catch the threads of the warp as they were raised by the 'draw-boy.' A great waste of material was unfortunately unavoidable by this method, but still a man and two boys could produce as much work in a week as the Hindu could accomplish in twelve months. At first, the material employed was silk spun from waste, or mixed with the finest Saxony wool, worsted and cotton being used for the embroidery; but after Napoleon introduced the Tibet goat into France, its wool superseded all other materials. The shawls were sold at prices varying from two to ten guineas, and a good demand soon sprang up for them. Manufactories were established at Edinburgh, Norwich, Paisley, Glasgow, and Lyon. Jacquard's loom was afterwards adopted, and for a time, France obtained the lead in the manufacture; but eventually, the energy of the British manufacturers enabled them to beat their rivals, if not always in beauty of pattern, at any rate in price and quality. Glasgow and Paisley are now the principal seats of our home-trade, which promises to be a permanent one; for while pelisses, scarfs, mantles, and cloaks come in and go out again, the shawl is never out of date, but holds its own through all the mutations of fashion.

A PICNIC AT ALEPPO.

It is the month of June, and we have been sleeping all night on the terrace of our house at Aleppo, with the star-spangled heavens for our canopy, and despite the dreadful predictions of Signor Polleam-towkywitch, the pacha's private physician, who has foretold the destruction of the entire population from this pernicious custom. The plaintive muezzin calls from the various minarets to warn us that it is 4 A.M.; and another remembrance of this fact, is the deliciously cool morning breeze which invariably sets in at this hour during summer, and under whose influence we feel thoroughly invigorated. Come, jump up, friend, for it is time to get ready for the great picnic which is to come off to-day in the gardens near Bab-il-Farage.

What commodious and useful places these terraces of Aleppo are! In case of danger or assault, we could pass from our own terrace to others nearly a mile away, simply by scaling the low walls which separate one house from another; and, indeed, this occurred during the outbreak in 1850, when the Mohammedan population massacred and ill-used so many of the Christians: the inhabitants fled from house-top to house-top, till they assembled in one of the strongest khans—this very one, the Khan Halilra—and barricaded themselves securely. You need not go peeping over that wall, however, at this early hour, to verify my words, unless you have any particular wish to have an old slipper and very hard words hurled at your head. Fatalah Karalli, his wife, and five lovely daughters, are now stretched out there on the floor, side by side, and they are always early risers, so as to decamp before daylight shews. You will be careful,

also, in groping your way to the steps which lead into the kitchen of our house, not to stumble over those mats, and sacks, and jars, for they contain our winter-store of provisions, in the shape of burghal,* chillies, onions, &c.—all which will be spread out on these mats, reaching all over the terrace, as soon as the sun is up. The terrace, also, is the drying-yard of our laundress; it is, further, our poultry-yard; for here, in commodious wicker-baskets, we keep a few select laying-hens, which supply us with fresh eggs for breakfast every morning.

A picnic at Aleppo has this great advantage over picnics in other countries—namely, that nobody has any care or anxiety as to what to provide. A caterer is selected, and every one forming the party pays into his hands, some days previously, a fixed sum, with which he and his coadjutors get everything ready against the hour of need. Ladies, however, and strangers that are invited, are always exempted. The caterer has no sinecure of it, and for at least a full week before the event comes off, is in a perpetual state of agitation and perspiration. First, he has to ascertain how many are expected to assemble; the number of donkeys they will bring with them, for fodder as well as food must be provided for these latter. Then there is the terrible search, which carries him from one end of the city to the other, and even to suburban villages, to collect together the most eminent musicians of the day; and these, being mostly Hebrews, require a separate staff for the proper superintendence of their *cuisine*. There will be babies that require *berceaus*; and, again, the choice of the locality entails almost as much responsibility as a general incurs in placing his batteries. Apropos of this, there is the *batterie de cuisine*. What are the poor man's discomforts and trials in trying to collect together sufficient material for the feast, and to constitute an extemporaneous kitchen for all kinds of purposes, from pap for the infants, to the huge turkey stuffed with rice and all kinds of condiments! Not a Zouave or a Soyer was ever in such perplexity. Moreover, he has to suit all palates—for assuredly there will be gathered together the nations of the earth, under the shades of those pleasant tamarisk-trees, by the borders of the rivulet—and their tastes are as various as are their creeds and complexions.

By this time, the murmuring of voices; the moving to and fro of lights and lanterns in the khan; the jabbering of old Arabic ladies, cruelly upbraiding their slaves for things they have themselves carefully stowed away in some basket; the lamentations of the old lady who has lost her slippers in shuffling down stairs, and upset her candle into the bargain; the clattering of tin pots and pans, carried down and laden upon mules, under the animadversions of our friend the caterer and his staff; the occasional dismal howl, raised by luckless individuals who have dropped the fragile bottle, and exorcised therefrom the only spirit they depended upon for the day; the furious blowing of charcoal-fires through a pipe-tube, to make the coffee boil; the braying of donkeys; the crowing of cocks—I positively believe some of the Aleppo hens crow also; the intolerable chirruping of early sparrows; the uncouth, unnatural, half-neigh, half-bray of the mule: all these combined serve to render one wide awake indeed; and when from a dormitory in the centre of the square of the khan—not bigger than an Indian hut—a wealthy Bagdad proprietor issues forth to see his camels fed, and they, gurgling, add their discordant voices to the tumult around!—why, then, it is high time to jump into our saddles, and sally forth in search of the pleasures of this festive day.

Although it is now fairly daylight, if we were to follow the sultan's highway, there might, owing to the extreme narrowness of the alleys—for what else

can we call them?—be danger of stumbling over a dead dog or some mass of garbage. A small bribe to the *baob* of the enclosed bazaar just opposite the khan's gates, enables us to make a shorter and far pleasanter cut. Most true that we have to climb up six steps at every gateway, and down six steps into the bazaar itself; on either side of which stand open deserted shops, full of rich wares, and whose only protection during the night has been the massive gates, the key of which is kept by yonder miserable, one-eyed, white-bearded old fellow, who, with half-extinguished lantern, guides us through, assisted by a numerous staff of equally ugly and ill-fed dogs.

Here we are in the last narrow street leading to Bab-il-Farage, and where the wooden shutters of the shops are secured by padlocks which anybody could open with a toothpick. By this time, our party has augmented tremendously. Ladies in fine silk dresses, mounted upon milk-white donkeys, with showy saddles, and all riding astraddle; panniers full of babies; old ladies and old gentlemen, with their grand-children stuck up before and behind them. Truly, we are a motley company, for we live *sans cérémonie* at Aleppo; and the consul-general of France is deep in argument with the little Polish bootmaker; and our clever Genoese tailor is making us crack our sides with laughter, as he recounts how he detected his servant's peculations in the boot-line, by carefully besmeared with cobbler's wax. You observe yonder strange-looking old fellow with a prodigious proboscis—it is a curious fact that all native Aleppines, both men and women, have immense noses—well, that is our neighbour, Fatallah Karalli; and that huge black cap, which is called a *kulpak*, is an heirloom through generations, conferring upon the wearer exemption from all taxes, for some past service rendered to the sultan.

Here we are at Bab-il-Farage. The sentry, who was fast asleep, starts up at our approach, and assumes a soldier-like attitude, as far as he can, with only one boot on, the other having served him for a pillow. At this point, we diverge to the left, following the course of a bubbling little stream that leads to Kittab, where the suburban villas of many of the gentry are situated. Only the caterer and his staff proceed right ahead to the fixed-on spot, there to arrange things against breakfast-time. Yonder is the picturesque little mill, under which nestles a coffee-shop; and the *oxfeye* has made mighty preparations against our advent, for will he not reap a rich harvest—marshala! Here, also, is the old woman with her three milk-cows; and here, on scores of little wooden stools, are soon seated our noble selves, inhaling the delicious cool air of morning, the fragrance of a hundred scented flowers, tobacco through long pipes, short pipes, or cigars; and smoke through the bubbling water of the nargheli; and imbibing sundry small cups of coffee, and very many bowls of fresh milk. All the ladies smoke, excepting the unmarried ones; and these and the children make amends for the want by disposing of whole water-melons at an alarming rate. Here we are joined by the élite from Kittab (including a cobbler, who has married a rich wife); and as the sun is getting hot, and we have enjoyed *keif* to our heart's content, we up into our saddles, and so halter-skelter off for the gardens. It is good to ride hastily, for there are beggars by the roadside, and their name is Legion, and their deformities are Legion, and their noise would make Babel, by comparison, a peaceful abode.

Can we find the spot without any guide to pilot us there? My dear fellow, my good man, you must be deaf to ask such a question. Can you not hear the vile uproar behind yonder hedge? List ye not to the infantine squalls, the harah shrieking voice of the old lady who lost her slippers, and who is now in a towering passion with the poor caterer and his staff for presuming to act without her advice? Have you

* Boiled wheat split and dried in the sun.

no ears for the death-struggle and fluttering of legions of poultry being slaughtered? Here we are by the river's side, and under the pleasant shade of many trees; and under these trees are spread a goodly assortment of carpets and divan cushions; and yonder, close by the water, sit the select band—veritable Hebrews, in sombre attire, and with long beards, and unwashed faces. While they favour us with a specimen of their skill in music, both instrumental and vocal, I may confide to you, that if the captive children of Israel, by the waters of Babylon, sung and played no better than these their descendants do, were I their Ninevite masters, I would not press them for another stave.

From every available branch of every available tree are pendent ropes, to serve as swings for the children and the young ladies. Now and then, an Aleppine fop clammers into one of these, cigarette in mouth, and makes a caricature of himself as he assumes different exquisite attitudes, and swings to and fro under the umbrageous foliage.

The garden has been hired for the day, so that there is no fear of intrusion, besides which, we have *casernes* or sentries posted at every entrance. It is a full mile in length, and half a one in breadth; and by the borders of the rivulet are parterres of choice flowers, while many fine fruit-trees are bending under the weight of their harvests; there are grape-vines also, but the fruit is yet unripe. All these are entirely at our disposal; and even the green grapes don't escape, for, compressed between two flat stones, they afford a juice which is much used for culinary purposes by all the inhabitants. You want to know who that fierce-looking man in a cavalry-braided coat buttoned up to the chin, needily inexpressibles, and native red boots, is? That, according to his own account, is Colonel de Medro-Barba, a count, and also, as he says, a distinguished soldier. He is a friend of the Polish doctor's, and his guest. The criticism of the Indies is launched against the non-appearance of under-linen, and I can swear positively that when he stooped, I saw he had no stockings on. To make amends for this, however, he sports a long cavalry sword, which I believe he sleeps with. Poverty, it is true, is no butt for jokes; but this rascal told me such an awful falsehood five minutes ago, that I at once set him down as one of those arrant and vagrant impostors that stray through Syria, imposing upon the hospitality and kindness of the people. He said that he knew Malta well, and that the governor was his intimate friend; and on account of his being such a celebrated commander, the governor asked him to review the *Maltese mounted Rifles*; and that the horses and men were superb! He is a capital hand at accounts, and will borrow five piastres of every one he can to-day, and call to-morrow to make it up to ten, after which we may expect to be rid of his society.

You are looking at that group of fine-looking fellows in undress military uniform, who are in earnest conversation with our worthy consul. They are indeed soldiers, every inch of them, and good men and Christians to boot. The unmistakable sadness which overshadows even their most pleasant smile, speaks volumes of the sorrows of exile; they are Hungarian officers under surveillance here—as you may observe by yonder Turkish soldiers—and it is a pleasure and an honour to us to enjoy their company.

But here, again, is the old lady who lost her slippers. As the French dragoman justly observes, 'Elle est comme un perroquet enrage.' She is indeed like a demented parrot; she speaks of everything to everybody—blowing up the servants, blowing up the girls for swinging, making hideous faces at small children, that frighten them into fits; picking up an old bit of a broken bottle, and disputing with everybody that it is a precious stone. She positively

won't leave the donkeys alone, because the poor things bray, but curses them, and wishes the devil would burn their grandfathers. If I thought braying would do any good, I should bray lustily, for I hunger; but I know, ala! that there is no hope of satisfying these cravings until close upon noon, and it wants a full hour to that yet.

Come, then, and let me leave the fair sex to their narghelies and swings, and beyond reach of yonder vile music, seek amusement elsewhere. You perceive my walking-stick serves as a gun, and I hope we shall have a little occupation for it at the further end of the garden. There, under those fig-trees, we can recline by the water-side; and whilst you angle for white-bait, which are plentiful and delicious here, I will pop off the becaicos, if those two lark-shooting French captains will only keep out of range, and not frighten them away. That party you see seated under that pleasant arbour are betting who can shoot the most swallows on the wing; and the distinguished Colonel de Medro-Barba has just fired, shewing his skill in arms and aim by hitting an unhappy black sunnah on the arm. There will be a dreadful row in five minutes, but as the Pacha's *cavou* is present, it will soon be hushed up, and you and I will have the gratification of contributing to the fine levied upon this gross imposter. Here, also, under yon apricot is another group, no other than Mother Karalli and her five daughters, with their five admirers. All the gentlemen are musicians (*amateurs*); and the little fellow with the fierce moustache, that twists itself round and round until it reaches his ears, is the lover of the lovely Katoor. He is a fire-eater, according to his own bruited fame; and it is well for you that you stepped back so expeditiously this morning, when I warned you, for had the lady complained—thousand thunders!—I don't know how he would have satisfied his vengeance. His loose, baggy scarlet trousers and highly embroidered coat; his unimpeachable patent-leather boots and bran-new tarboushes; his well-macassared locks and whiskers, and his highly scented handkerchief—to say nothing of his watch-guard and seals—set him off as an Adonis before the young ladies; as he plays the guitar, and accompanies it with a voice like an owl in a consumption, and as many gesticulations as a galvanised monkey, he is perfection itself, in the eyes of these good people, who cannot ask what time of day it is without screaming and getting excited over the matter, and throwing themselves into such fearful postures, that the marvel is how they ever get straight again. Instead of hearing the love-song which he is now singing, if we chanced to be about the Joliette at Marseille, we should hear quite another melody from a sun-burned looking old fellow in a frayed coat, whose agent the above individual is, and who, being unable to sell his consignments, uses them upon himself, and sends home favourable accounts as to prospects.

Here we are at last at our fixed-on resting-place, and here, too, have found their way some twenty damsels, who are busily engaged upon their great national dish for our breakfast. They are going to make *kibbeys* for some fivescore; and *kibbeys* are made of very fat mutton-tails, crushed in a mortar with burghal (in grain or flour), with chillies, onions, garlic, pepper, and salt. You perceive how carefully they wash themselves—a necessary precaution, as they will have to dabble in it, and fast it about for some time before it will be fit for use. What seems rather savage, and makes one almost loathe even the most beautiful of these girls, is the fact that, after this raw material has been well pestled and mortared together, they eat whole handfuls of it, and so will every Aleppine, and even many Europeans that have been in Aleppo long. Perhaps, under the process of manipulation, it becomes like the Bedouin's raw meat under his saddle, and is cooked perfectly to their satisfaction.

We are not, however, long disturbed by these fair

nymphs. The kibbeys have to be cooked, and in divers forms, so they leave us alone in our glory, and under these fat fig-trees we recline. Hark ! listen to yonder chirp ? Now, look out—pop ! and down comes a becafeico that would gladden the heart of the greatest epicure at Paris, especially if it had been preserved in oil, as these greasy southerners love to have them. Did you ever see such a lump of fat ? That fellow, looking in no friendly manner towards me across the water, is an arnout of immense wealth, which he obtained by cutting people's throats and robbing them on the highway. He is a nobleman now, and a man of great influence. If you listen, you will hear the voices of his harem—a select one, indeed, and one that nearly cost me my life. When I was a greenhorn in these parts, I used to ramble about as fancy led, and among other places, clambered into yonder garden, where the ladies were swinging and enjoying themselves. What did he do but, instantly, draw his *tulwar*, and make a cut at my left arm ! He little thought, however, what a customer he had to deal with, for I was young and strong then, and my good right arm bent his sword-arm back and back until it broke in two places, and he yelled for mercy ; and the pacha, on learning the circumstance, bastinadoed him nearly to death. So we can shoot our becafeicos without fear of interference from him. Similarly, those five young Aleppine fops, who have secreted themselves under a mass of mangroves, are mighty in words and small in deeds. They compare sinews and limbs, and clothe and shoes, and vow this very day to win the hearts of certain dulcimas that are of the company ; and they won't do it.

You have caught your white-bait by this time, and I have bagged a fair quantity of greasy little birds, and, hark ! the muezzin calls to prayer—for Moslems ; for us, it is the signal for breakfast, so we hurry back as soon as we can. What a scene ! what a profusion ! what a company ! There is a horrid stench of oil, but that is only the Jews having their eels for breakfast. You perceive that dessert, and everything else, is set before the guests at the same time. Here are kibbeys stewed with milk and cabbage, kibbeys fried, kibby done in the oven ; fish, flesh, fowl, and even poor larks and our becafeicos, and your sprats. Here is dried mishmash (apricots)—which is rolled out like an old ship's chart—cooked with milk and sugar, and salads of every description ; lettuce, with oil and vinegar ; water-cresses and garlic, with curdled cream ; onions and radishes ; beet-root stewed in sugar, and soaked in vinegar ; huge turkeys, and whole sheep, stuffed with almonds, and the tasty seeds of the cedars of Lebanon ; *pillays* of every description. Here are small plates of pickles that would make you weep for an hour, they are so hot, and large plates of olives, some preserved in salt and water, some in oil ; but before all comes the Damascus olive, black and shiny as a prune, and so resembling the fruit, that the French consul (who is a *farceur*) has persuaded an unlucky skipper to try one or two with his apricot-stew, and the result may be presumed. Then there are little plates with slices of sausages from all parts of the world, highly inflamed with garlic ; and without their assistance, yonder stout man, who wears nankin apparel, and a very sheepish head, and who is the consul-general for the two Sicilies, could never digest anything, he says. There are also green chillies, looking so dreadfully cool outside, and so awfully hot inside, that you bite out of curiosity, and grin out of despair and anguish.

It is a long repast this noontide one ; and what with the heat and the fatigue of manipulation, every one is disposed for a siesta—not, however, of course, before the pipe and coffee : then, in fulfilment of the prophet Jeremiah's predictions, we go every man to our own fig-tree, and slumber under the shadow thereof. As the coolness of the evening draws on, we awake revived. These mysterious old demijohns—bottles

of huge size—are placed upon the green, and glasses not bigger than a thimble handed round. Though the allowance is small, it is frequent ; and under its influence, and that of the cool afternoon breeze, the musicians come out amazingly strong ; the dancers find their legs ; the old impostor in red boots dances a fandango, the doctor, a Highland fling. Two flutes, a fiddle, and a guitar enable us to get up a quadrille ; and the greatest marvel to me is, that my lovely partner—with a strawberry-patch on either cheek, which is only the remains of the Aleppo button or boil—does not fling her slippers into my face every time she sets to me ; but, monkey-like, they can hold on by their toes. So the sun goes down in the west, and our temporary house is dismantled ; ropes, donkeys, babies, pans, guests, all disappear, and a few score of owls take possession of the field, hooting the livelong night, and mistaking castaway bones for mice, most probably to their great discomfort.

HIGHLAND STORY-TELLING.

How few are the pursuits of civilised life in which it is possible to make our business our pleasure ! A man may be, and not seldom is, alas ! 'devoted to his profession,' to the exclusion of love, friendship, and all that beautifies the existence of a human creature, but such a one can be scarcely said to take a pleasure in anything. Dennis the hangman, we are told, evinced, indeed, an excessive satisfaction in tying up his numerous customers ; but even setting aside the fact, that he was partly the creation of the novelist, his case must be considered a peculiar one. King Richard III., with characteristic acuteness, pointed out a nice distinction in his observation, 'Business first, and pleasure afterwards,' when he killed the king before he smothered the babies ; for although certain portions of a man's duty may give him great delight—as we have known a lawyer who never could read out a dead client's will without the most joyful emotions, and a clergyman of the Church of England who could never recite the communion-service without a certain uncouth appreciation, which his voice could not conceal—men go about their daily toil, for the most part, *as toil*, and are glad when it is over, and they are sitting by the fireside at home. The expression upon our faces when we are at our desks is not generally of a rapturous character, even if that smooth and stony look be not adopted, upon which Professional or Commercial Sagacity is supposed, by the sanguine, to be lithographed. Authors, indeed, for the most part, and Painters always, are exceptions to this rule ; and it is perhaps in unconscious acknowledgment of this fact, that men of business look upon their efforts less as work than as recreation. We ourselves happen to know something to the contrary of that, and would prefer some easier profession still. The American gentleman's occupation of 'smoking glasses for eclipse times,' would be light enough for us, but it would scarcely satisfy our original need in combining business with pleasure. No ; for a profession of that kind command us to the oral collection of popular tales, in a picturesque country, and where whisky is to be found in perfection and abundance.

Need we say, then, how we envy that task which Mr Campbell set himself, and has so well performed, of making himself acquainted with the Popular Tales of the West Highlands.* We cannot fancy any summer-time more pleasantly spent than that he passed among the lochs and islands of the West, collecting the materials for these two charming volumes. He sought those fastnesses not as a stranger, but as one who was sure of a welcome there, and who could converse with the ancient race in their

* *Popular Tales of the West Highlands*, orally collected, with a Translation. By J. F. Campbell. Edinburgh and Douglas.

native tongue; and his account of his wanderings is something very different from that of the fine gentlemen who think it capital fun to play at being savages for the month when London is empty, and then to give Pall Mall a shudder by the narrative of their adventures in morocco-gilt.

We all know the common-place and used-up framework to which our modern authors betake themselves, who wish to link short stories together by some continuous thread: how a large party are collected together in a country-house, and can't get out for the snow, and have 'got through' the fine old library, and exhausted all indoor games, and would have absolutely died of ennui, had not the youngest of the party, clapping her hands, exclaimed: 'Eureka! I have got it. Let us all sit down by the fire, and tell stories.' Nothing would be more foolish or can be more unlikely to happen in any country-house in England. Nothing can be more natural and proper in a Highland shieling. In the absence of books, and the great deficiency of gas and moderator-lamps, the practice of story-telling, as an evening amusement, has been universal with the Gael, almost from the beginning of time.

In telling these stories, narrative and dialogue are mixed; what the characters have told each other to do is repeated as narrative. The people in the story tell it to each other, and branch off into discussions about their horses, and houses, and crops, or anything that happens to turn up. One story grows out of another, and the tree is almost hidden by a foliage of the speaker's invention. Here and there comes a passage repeated by rote, and common to many stories, and to every good narrator. It seems to act as a rest for the memory. Now and then, an observation from the audience starts an argument. In short, one good story in the mouth of a good narrator, with a good audience, might easily go rambling on for a whole winter's night, as it is said to do. The "Slim Scurvy Champion" used to last for four hours." Connall Gulban" used to last for three evenings. Those that wanted to hear the end, had to come back." One of my collectors said it would take him a month to write it down, but I am bound to add, that he has since done it in a very much shorter time. I have heard of a man who fell asleep by the fire, and found a story going on when he awoke next morning. I have one fragment, on which—as I am told—an old man in Ross-shire used to found twenty-four stories, all of which died with him."

These narratives are generally very old stories indeed; nobody—not even Mr Campbell—can tell how old. Ancient folks repeat them as told by their sires, who received them from their ancestors, one of whom may have taken them down—though certainly not in short-hand—from the lips of Ossian himself. They have much in common with the popular legends of other nations—with the German stories told by the Brothers Grimm, with the French tales of the Countess d'Aulnoy, with Boccaccio's Italian novels, and with the *Arabian Nights*—but many of them possess certain features also which are entirely national, and their own. The foreign element has grown around it, perhaps, so as to make recognition at first sight difficult, but the heart of the thing is found to be Highland still. Great logs of drift-wood find their way to the shores of the Hebrides, and are turned to use. Such a log I lately saw in South Uist. No tool-mark was on it; it had lost its own foliage, but it was covered with a brown and white marine foliage of sea-weed and dead barnacles, and it was drilled in all directions by those curious sea-shells, which are supposed by the people to be embryo geese. It was sound, though battered, and a worthy Celtic smith was about to add it to the roof of a cottage, which he was making of boulders and turf. It was about to share the fate of many popular tales, and become a part of something else.'

It must be an interesting matter to scrape the barnacles off, and find out of what sort the wood really is. But great as may be the pleasure of this subsequent antiquarian investigation, it must surely be inferior to that afforded, in the first place, by Mr Campbell's method of collection. What a picture is here set before us of Man and his Dwelling-place in the West Highlands, and how we envy the author not only the graphic talent that has reproduced it, but his experience of the original scene!

'Let me describe one of these old story-men as a type of his kind. I trust he will not be offended, for he was very polite to me. His name is MacPhie; he lives at the north end of South Uist, where the road ends at a sound, which has to be forded at the ebb to get to Benbecula. The house is built of a double wall of loose boulders, with a layer of peat three feet thick between the walls. The ends are round, and the roof rests on the inner wall, leaving room for a crop of yellow gowana. A man might walk round the roof on the top of the wall. There is but one room, with two low doors, one on each side of the house. The fire is on the floor; the chimney is a hole above it; and the rafters are hung with pendants and festoons of shining black peatreek. They are of birch from the mainland, American drift-wood, or broken wreck. They support a covering of turf and straw, and stones and heather-ropes, which keep out the rain well enough. The house stands on a green bank, with gray rocks protruding through the turf; and the whole neighbourhood is pervaded by cockle-shells, which indicate the food of the people and their fishing pursuits. In a neighbouring kiln there were many cart-loads about to be burned, to make that lime which is so durable in the old castles. The owner of the house, whom I visited twice, is seventy-nine. He told me nine stories, and, like all the others, declared that there was no man in the islands who knew them so well. "He could not say how many he knew;" he seemed to know versions of nearly everything I had got; and he told me plainly, that my versions were good for nothing. "Huch! Thou hast not got them right at all." "They came into his mind," he said, "sometimes at night when he could not sleep—old tales that he had not heard for threescore years." He had the manner of a practised narrator, and it is quite evident that he is one; he chuckled at the interesting parts, and laid his withered finger on my knee as he gave out the terrible bits with due solemnity. A small boy in a kilt, with large round glittering eyes, was standing mute at his knee, gazing at his wrinkled face, and devouring every word. The boy's mother first boiled, and then mashed potatoes; and his father, a well-grown man in tartan breeks, ate them. Ducks and ducklings, a cat and a kitten, some hens and a baby, all tumbled about on the clay-floor together, and expressed their delight at the savoury prospect, each in his own fashion; and three wayfarers dropped in, and listened for a spell, and passed their remarks till the ford was shallow. The light came streaming down the chimney, and through a single pane of glass, lighting up a track in the blue mist of the peat-smoke, and fell on the white hair and brown withered face of the old man, as he sat on a low stool, with his feet to the fire; and the rest of the dwelling, with all its plenishing of boxes and box-beds, dishes and dresser, and gear of all sorts, faded away through shades of deepening brown, to the black darkness of the smoked roof and the "peat-corner." There we sat, and smoked and talked for hours, till the tide ebbed; and then I crossed the ford by wading up to the waist, and dried my clothes in the wind in Benbecula.'

Mr Campbell never spared himself, or grudged the time and trouble spent in gathering this drift-wood. He had the hardihood, in spite of the club-windows of St James's Street, to accompany two tinkers, with

black faces, and a pan of burning coal each, down that fashionable thoroughfare, and on through the Park to Westminster. It was a bold expedition even on the part of a gentleman who is entitled to write a dedication, beginning with 'My dear Lorne,' to a marquis. His two friends were followed by a wife, and preceded by a mangy cur with a stiff tail, and altogether it was not an aristocratic procession to be connected with. But what did that matter? Whence could our author have got the story of 'the man who travelled to learn what shivering meant,' except from the tinker-bodies?

Since his search extended over such an immense space, it was necessary for him, in many instances, to employ assistants; but they were of a sort incapable of literary deceit at all events—drovers, crofters, fishermen, and blind fiddlers—and we may thoroughly depend upon the genuineness of the tales presented to us. The narrators have, for the most part, never met, and have acted independently; and yet, in many instances, I have received versions of the same story from each and from other sources, and I have myself heard the same incidents repeated by their authorities, and by others whom they had never seen; sometimes even the very words. 'Practical men,' says Mr Campbell, 'may despise the tales, earnest men condemn them as lies, some even consider them wicked; one refused to write any more for a whole estate; my best friend says they are all "blethers." But one man's rubbish may be another's treasure, and what is the standard of value in such a pursuit as this?

"And what are you going to do with them stories, Mr Camal?" said a friend of mine, as he stood amongst the brown sea-weed, at the end of a pier, on a fine summer's evening, and watched my departure in a tiny boat.

"Print them, man, to be sure."

'My friend is famous for his good stories, though they are of another kind, and he uses tobacco; he eyed me steadily for a moment, and then he disposed of the whole matter monosyllabically, but forcibly—"Huch!" It seemed to come from his heart.'

The introduction, from which these quotations are taken, extends to more than hundred pages, and is one of the most interesting and lively prefaces to any book—let alone one whose theme is antiquities—we have ever read. The tales themselves, which were, of course, recited in Gaelic, are here printed in that language, as well as in English, and it is likely that the correction of the press gave Mr Campbell some little trouble. None of them, unfortunately, are short enough to be extracted here, or we should have liked to have shewn what wondrous guise our old nursery tales of Fortunio, Cinderella, and the like have adopted in the Western Isle. Most of them have something of a moral, and none better than that of *The Shifty Lad*, who would not learn any art but that of thieving. His mother said to him: 'If that is the art thou art going to choose for thyself, thine end is to be hanged at the bridge of Baile Cliabh (Dublin), in Eirinn'; but it must be added that she sent him to a master-thief to learn his profession, for all that. The Shifty Lad goes through many surprising adventures—some of which are found in German tales, some in Norse, some in Sanscrit, some in Italian, and some even identical with those in the story of Rampsintus told to Herodotus more than two thousand years ago, by priests in Egypt—and comes successful out of all of them, getting the king's daughter, as usual, for his wife at last. But the good-luck of a thief never lasts for ever. A little after the marriage, the pair were taking a walk to Baile Cliabh; and when they were going over the bridge 'the Shifty Lad asked the king's daughter what was the name of that place; and the king's daughter told him that it was the bridge of Baile Cliabh, in Eirinn; and the Shifty Lad said: "Well, then, many is the time that my mother said to me that my end would be to be hanged at the

bridge of Baile Cliabh, in Eirinn; and she made me that prophecy many a time when I might play her a trick."

'And the king's daughter said: "Well, then, if thou thyself shouldst choose to hang over the little side (wall) of the bridge, I will hold thee aloft a little space with my pocket-napkin."

'And they were at talk and fun about it; but at last it seemed to the Shifty Lad that he would do it for sport, and the king's daughter took out her pocket-napkin, and the Shifty Lad went over the bridge, and he hung by the pocket-napkin of the king's daughter, as she let it over the little side (wall) of the bridge, and they were laughing to each other.

'But the king's daughter heard a cry: "The king's castle is going on fire!" and she started, and she lost her hold of the napkin; and the Shifty Lad fell down, and his head struck against a stone, and the brain went out of him; and there was in the cry but the sport of children; and the king's daughter was obliged to go home a widow.'

With a strong family-likeness in many features to the *Arabian Nights*, these stories have less repose about them, and are calculated to produce nightmare rather than dreaminess; but, on the other hand, they have far more humour in them. Surely, it is rare to find a fable with such fun in it as in this old Gaelic fancy, picked up by Mr Campbell in the Isle of Man: 'The fish all gathered once to choose a king; and the fluke—him that has the red spots on him—stayed at home to make himself pretty, putting on his red spots, to see if he would be king, and he was too late, for when he came the herring was king of the sea. So the fluke curled his mouth on one side, and said: "A simple fish like the herring, king of the sea!" and his mouth has been to one side ever since.'

THE WILD HUNTRESS.

CHAPTER XCIX.—SEEKING A CACHE.

We rode direct for Robideau's Pass. The night still continued dark, but we had no difficulty in finding our way. Even in the obscurity, the deep trace of the heavy emigrant train was sufficiently conspicuous; and we were enabled to follow the back-track with precision. Our experienced guide could have conducted us over it blindfold.

That we were pursued, and hotly pursued, there could be little doubt. For my part, I felt certain of it. The stake which Stebbins had hitherto held was too precious to be parted with on slight conditions. The jealous vigilance with which Lillian had been guarded along the route—amounting, as I now incidentally ascertained, to a positive espionage—the yellow duenna at once acting as spy and protectress—all were significant of the intent already suspected by us, but of which the young girl herself was perhaps happily ignorant.

The failure of his design—and now for the second time—would be a rude *contre-temps* to the pseudo-apostle; and would no doubt endanger his expected promotion. Besides, he must have believed, or suspected, that Marian Holt still lived—that she had survived the exposure consequent on her escape from the first caravan; and this belief or suspicion would now be confirmed by the reappearance of the dog. Nay, it was almost certain, that on recognising the animal, the truth had suddenly flashed upon him: that Marian was herself upon the ground, and that the spotted face that had for the moment deceived him, was the countenance of his Tennesseean bride. The abduction following upon the instant would not only confirm this belief, but would redouble his eagerness in a pursuit that promised the recapture of both the victims, who had thus unexpectedly escaped from his control.

Though with different motives, it was natural that

Holt himself should be equally eager to pursue. He might still suspect nothing of Marian or her disguise. To him it would simply appear that his other child had been stolen from the camp—carried off by Indians—and that should be sufficient to rouse him to the most strenuous efforts for her recovery.

For these reasons, we had no doubt about our being pursued; and with all the zeal and energy of which our apostolic enemy and his myrmidons were capable of putting forth.

Twenty miles separated the Mormon camp from the entrance to Robideau's Pass. Nearly the whole of that distance we had traversed at a gallop. So far we had experienced no uneasiness; but, after entering the pass, our foaming horses began to shew fatigue. Those of Sure-shot and Wingrove, that were weaker than the rest, manifested signs of giving in. Both were evidently broken, and without rest could go no further.

This produced renewed apprehension. We knew that the horses of our pursuers would be comparatively fresh—after their long rest at their encampment—while ours had not only made a considerable journey the day before, but on that same day had passed over fifty miles of ground—twenty of it in a gallop! No wonder they were manifesting signs of distress.

Shortly after entering the pass, we drew up to deliberate. By continuing onward, we should be almost certain to be overtaken. This was the more probable, from the keen pursuit we had reason to anticipate. To remain where we were, would be to await the coming up of the enemy—no doubt in such numbers as to render our capture secure; and any attempt to defend ourselves would be idle as fatal. It was no longer with Indians we should have to deal—no longer with lances and arrows—but with strong bold men, armed like ourselves, and far outnumbering us.

To conceal ourselves within the gorge, and permit our pursuers to pass, might have served our purpose for the time, had there been sufficient cover; but neither the rocks nor trees offered an advantageous hiding-place for our horses. The risk of their being discovered appeared too great. We dared not trust to such slight chance of security.

Within the pass, it was not possible to part from the trail; and on discovering the condition of our horses, we regretted not having left it before entering. We even entertained the question of returning some distance; and leaving the trail by ascending a spur of the mountains in our rear; but this appeared too perilous. Perhaps at that moment our pursuers might have entered the pass? Perhaps at that moment 'down the glen rode armed men'—though as yet our ears were not assailed by the sound of their trampling.

Fortunately, in this moment of hesitancy, a thought occurred to our Mexican comrade, that promised to release us from the dilemma. It was a *memory* that had suddenly arisen to him. He remembered, on one of his trapping expeditions, having discovered a ravine that led out of Robideau's Pass on the northern side. It was a mere cleft in the cliff, just wide enough to admit the body of a man on horseback. Further up, it opened into a little plain—or *vallon*, as the Mexican termed it—completely girt in by mountains. These on all sides rose so precipitously from the plain, as to render it impossible for a mounted man to scale them. The trapper had himself been obliged to return by the gorge—after having vainly endeavoured to find a way leading outward above. The *vallon* was therefore a *cul-de-sac*, or, as the trapper in his native synonym called it, a *bolson*.

Our guide was of opinion that this *bolson* would serve as a hiding-place until we could rest our horses; and he was confident that the entrance of the ravine was not far from where we had halted,

and, moreover, that he should be able to find it without difficulty. His advice, therefore, was, that we should seek the *gorge*, and having found it, ride up into the *vallon*, and there remain, till the following night. The pursuit might pass in the meantime, and return again; but whether or not, our animals would then be rested; and even should we again encounter the pursuers, we might hope to escape, through the superior speed of our horses.

The plan was feasible. There was but one objection that struck me; and I offered it for the consideration of our guide. The *vallon*, as he had stated, was a *cul-de-sac*. Should we be tracked into it, there would be no chance of retreat: we should be taken as in a trap?

'*Carrambol!*' exclaimed the Mexican in answer to my suggestion, 'no fear of being tracked by such curs as they. They know nothing of that business—not one of their whole fraternity could follow the trace of a buffalo in snow-time. *Carrambol!* no.'

'There is one who could,' I replied; 'one who could follow a timber trail than that.'

'What! A *rastreador* among these *Judios*! Who, *caballero*?'

'Their father!'

I whispered the reply, so that neither of the girls should overhear it.

'Oh! true,' muttered the Mexican—'the father of the hussy—hunter himself? *Carral!* that's like enough. But no matter. I can take you up the *gorge* in such fashion that the most skilled *rastreador* of the prairies would never suspect we had passed through. Fortunately, the ground is favourable. The bottom of the little *cánon* is covered with cut rock. The hoof will leave no mark upon these.'

'Remember that some of our horses are shod: the iron will betray us!'

'No, señor, we shall muffle them; *nos vamos con los pies en medias!* (Let us travel in stockings!)

The idea was not new to me; and without further hesitation, we proceeded to carry it into execution. With pieces of blanket, and strips cut from our buckskin garments, we muffled the hoofs of our shod horses; and, after following the wagon-trail, till we found a proper place for parting from it, we diverged in an oblique direction, towards the bluff that formed the northern boundary of the pass. Along this we followed the guide in silence; and after going for a quarter of a mile further, we had the satisfaction to see him turn to the left, and suddenly disappear from our sight, as if he had ridden into the face of the solid rock!

We might have felt astonishment; but a dark chasm at the same instant came under our eyes; and we knew it was the ravine of which our guide had been in search.

Without exchanging a word, we turned our horses' heads, and rode on up the cleft. There was water running among the shingle over which our steeds trampled; but it was shallow, and did not hinder their advance. It would further aid in concealing their tracks—should our pursuers succeed in tracing us from the main route. But we had little apprehension of their doing this: so carefully had we blinded our trail, on separating from that of the wagons.

On reaching the little *vallon*, we no longer thought of danger; but, riding on to its upper end, we dismounted, and made the best arrangements the circumstances would admit of for obtaining that repose, of which most of us stood sufficiently in need.

Wrapped in buffalo robes, and a little apart from the rest of our party, the sisters reclined side by side under the shade of a cotton-wood tree.

Long while had it been since these beautiful forms had reposed so near each other; and the soft low murmur of their voices, heard above the sighing of the breeze and the rippling sound of the mountain rills, admonished us, that each was confiding to the other the sweet secret of her bosom!

CHAPTER C.
IN PARADISO.

We come to the closing act of our drama. To understand it fully, it is necessary that the setting of the stage—the *mise-en-scène*—be described with a certain degree of minuteness.

The little valley-plain, or *vallon*, in which we had *cached* ourselves, was not over three hundred yards in length, and of an elliptical form. But for this form, it might have resembled some ancient crater scooped out of the mountain, that on all sides swept upward around it. The sides of this mountain trending up from the level of the plain rose not with a gentle acclivity, but with precipitous abruptness. At no point, however, did it assume the steepness of a cliff. It might have been scaled, with difficulty, by a man on foot—especially should he avail himself of the assistance of the trees—pines and trailing junipers—that grew over the face of the slope, so thickly as to conceal the greater portion of the rocky *façade*. Here and there, only a bare spot might be observed—a little buttress of white laminated gypsum, mingled with sparkling selenite; while at other places a miniature torrent, foaming over the rocks, and dancing among the dark cedars, presented a very similar appearance.

These little torrents, plashing down to the plain, formed numerous crystal rills that traversed the *vallon*. Like the branches of a silver candelabrum, all united near its centre; and there formed a pell-mell stream, that, sweeping onward, discharged itself through the ravine into Robideau's Pass.

The effect of this abundance of water had been to produce within the *vallon* a proportionate luxuriance of vegetation—though it had not assumed the form of a forest. A few handsome cotton-woods standing thinly over it were the only trees; but the surface exhibited a verdure of emerald brightness, enamelled by many a gay corolla, born to blush unseen within this sweet secluded glen. Along the edge of the rivulet, large water-plants projected their broad leaves languidly over the stream; and where the little cascades came down over the rocks, the flowers of beautiful orchids, and other rare epiphytes, were seen sparkling under the spray—many of them clinging to the *conifères*, and thus uniting almost the extreme forms of the botanical world!

Such lovely landscape was presented to our eyes in the ‘boson’ into which our trapper-guide had conducted us. It appeared lovely as we first beheld it, under the blue light of dawn; but lovelier far when the sun began to tinge the summits of the Mojada mountains that encircled it, and scatter his empurpled roses on the snowy peaks of the Wa-to-yah, just visible through the gorge.

‘*Este un Paraíso!* (It is a Paradise!)’ exclaimed the Mexican, warming with the poetry of his race. ‘*En verdian un Paraíso!* Even better peopled than the Paradise of old. *Mira! cavallero!*’ continued he. ‘Behold! not one Eve, but two! each, I daresay, as beautiful as the mother of mankind!’

As the trapper spoke, he pointed to the young girls, who, hand in hand, were returning from the stream—where they had been performing their ablutions. The spots of *allegria* had disappeared from the cheeks of Marian, that now gleamed in all their crimson picturesqueness. It was for Wingrove to admire these. My own eyes were riveted upon the rosy blonde; and, gazing upon her face, I could not help echoing the sentiment of the enthusiastic speaker: ‘Beautiful as the mother of mankind!’

Wingrove and I had been to the *lavatory* before them; and had succeeded to a certain extent in scouring our skins clear of the vermillion bedaubment. In the anticipation of this pleasant interview, it was natural we should seek to rescue ourselves from a disguise, that the eye of woman could not look upon otherwise than with *dégoût*.

It was natural, too, we should desire those clasped hands to come asunder—those maiden forms to separate from one another!

Fortune was pleased to respond to our desires. A flower hanging from the branch of a tree at that moment caught the eye of Marian; and, dropping her sister's hand, she hastened to gather it. Marian, who cared less for flowers, did not follow her. Perhaps her inclination tempted her the other way?

But one did follow the fair Marian—unable to resist the opportunity for free converse—the only one that had offered since that hour of sweet first impression.

How my heart bounded, when I beheld the blossom of the bignonia—for it was that which hung drooping from the branch of the cotton-wood, round which its bright leaves were amorously entwining! How it swelled with a triumphant joy, when I saw those tiny fingers extend towards the flower, gently pluck it from its stem, and place it upon my bosom!

Talk not of bliss, if it be not this!

We strayed on through the straggling trees, along the banks of the stream, by the edges of the little rills. We wandered around the *vallon*, and stood by the torrents that fell foaming from the rocks. We mingled our voices with the waters, that in low murmurings appeared to repeat the sentiment so endeared to us, ‘I think of thee!’

‘And you will, Marian—you will think of me?’

‘Yes, Edward!—for ever and ever!’

Was the kiss unallowed that could seal such promise? No—it was sacred—

Down to Earth's profound,

And up to Heaven!

Thus benighted with the sweet hallucination of love, how could we dream that on earth there existed an alloy? How suspect that into that smiling garden the dread serpent could intrude himself? Alas, he was at that moment approaching it—he was already near!

* * * * *

The place we had chosen for our temporary bivouac—and where we had passed the night—was at the upper extremity of the little valley, and close in to the cliff. We had selected this spot, from the ground being a little more elevated than the general surface, and in consequence drier. Several cotton-wood trees shaded it; and it was further sheltered by a number of large boulders of rock, that, having fallen from the cliff above, lay near its base. Behind these boulders, the men of our party had slept; not from any idea of the greater security afforded by them, but simply from a delicate motive—being thus separated from the *chamber* occupied by our fair *protégée*.

It had never occurred to us that our place of concealment could be discovered in the night; and even long after the day had arisen, so confident did we continue in our fancied security, that we had taken no precautions, neither to reconnoitre the cliffs in search of a way of retreat, nor to adopt any means of defence in the event of our being assailed.

As far as Wingrove and I were concerned, I have explained this negligence—for it was negligence of the most imprudent character. The Mexican, feeling quite certain that he had succeeded in blinding our trail, was perhaps less cautious than he might otherwise have been; and Sure-shot equally trusted to his new comrade—for whose skill the ex-ranger had conceived an exalted opinion.

I could see withal that Archilete was not without some apprehension. He had buckled on his artificial leg—the real one being fatigued by pressing too long on the stirrup—and, as he hobbled about over the ground, I noticed that from time to time he cast inquiring looks down the valley.

Observing these signs of impatience more than once, I began to grow uneasy.

Prudence required that even that sweet scene

should be interrupted—only temporarily, I hoped—until some plan should be adopted that would render us more secure against the contingency of our being discovered.

With my fair companion, I had turned away from the sweet whisperings of the cascade, and was facing to the upper end of the valley, when all at once I observed a strange manoeuvre on the part of 'Peg-leg.' The trapper had thrown himself flat upon the grass; and with his ear placed close to the ground, appeared to listen!

The movement was too significant not to attract the attention of everybody. My companion was the only one who did not comprehend it; but she observed that it had powerfully affected all the others, and an ejaculation of alarm escaped her, as she saw them hastening up to the spot occupied by the prostrate trapper.

Before we could reach him, the man had sprung back into an erect attitude; and, as he stamped his timber leg with violence upon the ground, was heard to exclaim:

'*Currando, camarados!* the curs are upon our trail! *Oiga los—el perro—el perro!*' (You hear them?—the dog—the dog!)

The words were scarcely out of his mouth when their interpretation followed in the sound that came pealing up the valley. Borne upon the sighing breeze, it was heard above the rushing noise of the waters—easily heard, and as easily understood. It was the bay of a dog, who ran 'gowling' along a trail.

Its deep tone was even identified. The huntress recognised it in the first note that fell upon her ear, as was evidenced by her quick exclamation:

'Wolf!—my dog Wolf!'

The speech had scarcely escaped her, before the dog himself made his appearance, convincing us all of his shorn identity. The animal, seeing us, ran no longer by the scent; but with raised snout came galloping across the valley, and bounded forward to receive the caresses of his mistress.

We rushed to our weapons; and, having secured them, ran behind the boulders of rock. It would have been idle to take to our horses. If our pursuers were following the dog, and guided by him, they would already be near enough to intercept our retreat from the valley? Perhaps they were at that moment in the gorge?

We had but one hope; and that was, that the dog might be *alone*. Missing Marian at the camp, he might have struck upon her trail, and been following it throughout the night?

It seemed scarcely probable; for Holt could have detained him, and in all likelihood would have done so? Still less probable did it appear, as we watched the movements of the dog himself. Instead of staying by Marian, and continuing to receive her caresses, we noticed that at short intervals he ran off again, making demonstrations in the direction he had come—as if in expectation of some one who had been following at his heels!

The slight hope we had conceived was quickly and rudely crushed, by the confirmation of this fact. The voices of men, echoing hoarsely through the gorge, confirmed it.

Beyond doubt, they were our pursuers, guided by the dog—who little understood the ruin he was thus conducting towards the object of his instinctive affections!

CHAPTER CL

AN UNEXPECTED DECEPTION.

Almost as soon as we heard the voices, we saw those who were giving utterance to them. A horseman appeared issuing from the jaws of the chasm—another, and another—until eight had filed into the open ground! They were all armed men—armed with guns, pistols, and knives.

He in the lead was at once identified. The colossal stature, the blanket coat, red shirt, and kerchief turban, proclaimed that the foremost of our pursuers was Holt himself.

Immediately behind him rode Stebbins; while those following in file were the executive myrmidons of the Mormon faith—the *Destroying Angels*!

On entering the open ground, Holt alone kept on without slackening his speed. Stebbins followed, but more cautiously, and at a distance of several lengths of his horse. The Danites at sight of our animals, and ourselves too—for they could not fail to see our faces over the rocks—drew up: not suddenly, but one after the other—as if irresolute whether to advance, or remain where they were. Even Stebbins, though moving on after the squatter, did so with evident reluctance. He saw the barrels of our rifles gleaming above the boulders; and, when within about fifty paces distant from us, he too reined in—keeping the body of Holt between himself and our guns.

The squatter continued to advance, without the slightest show of fear. So near had he got to us, that we could note the expression upon his features, though it was difficult to understand it. It was one that bespoke reckless determination—no doubt a determination to recover his child from the savages who had stolen her: for as yet he had no reason to think otherwise.

Of course, none of us thought of firing upon Holt; but had Stebbins at the moment advanced only a step nearer, there was more than one rifle ready to give out its deadly detonation.

Holt approached rapidly, his horse going at a trot. He held his long gun obliquely in front of him, and grasped in both hands, as if ready to fire on the instant.

All at once, he checked his horse, dropped the gun on the pommel of his saddle, and sat gazing towards us with a look of bewildered surprise. White faces appearing over the rocks instead of red ones, had caused this sudden change in his demeanour.

Before he had time to give utterance to his astonishment, Marian glided from behind the rock, and standing with arms extended, cried out:

'O father! they are not Indians! It is Marian! it is—'

At the same instant her sister appeared by her side. 'Marian alive!' cried Holt, recognising his long-lost daughter. 'My child Marian yet livin'! God be praised! Thar's one weight off o' my poor soul—an' now to ceze it o' another!'

As he uttered the last words, he wrenched his horse half around, dropped to his feet upon the nearer side; and quickly resting his rifle over the hollow of the saddle, brought its barrel to bear on the breast of Stebbins—who still sat upon horseback, scarce twenty paces distant from the spot.

'Now, Josh Stebbins!' cried the squatter in a voice of thunder, 'the time's come to squar the yurds wi' you!'

'What do you mean, Holt?' mechanically inquired the Mormon in trembling surprise. 'What do you mean by that?'

'I mean, you infernal skunk, that afore ye leave this groun', you've got to make a clean breast o' it, an' clar me o' the crime o' murder.'

'What murder?' inquired Stebbins prevaricatingly.

'Oh! you know what I'm talkin' about! 'Twant no murder. 'Twar only a suicide; an' God knows it broke my own heart.'

Holt's voice was husky with emotion. He continued after a pause:

'For all o' that, appearances war agin' me; an' you invented proofs that wud a stood good among lawyers, though thar as false as yur own black heart. Ye've kep' 'em over me for years, to serve yer rascally dersigns. But thar's neither law nor lawyers hyur to help you any longer. Thar's witnesses o'

both sides—yar own beauties down yander; an' some hyur o' a better sort, I reck'n. Afore them, I call on ye to declar that yar proofs war false, an' that I'm innocent o' the crime o' murder!"

There was a profound silence as the speaker finished. The strange and unexpected nature of the demand, held every one in breathless surprise. Even the armed men at the bottom of the *valley* said not a word; and perceiving that, by the defection of Holt, there was almost gun for gun against them, they shewed no signs of advancing to the protection of their apostolic leader.

The latter appeared for a moment to vacillate. The fear depicted upon his features was blended with an expression of the most vindictive bitterness—as that of a tyrant forced to yield up some despotic privilege which he had long wielded. True, it mattered little to him now. The intended victims of his vile contrivance—whatever it may have been—were likely to escape from his control in another way; but for all that he seemed loath to part with even the shadow of his former influence.

He was not allowed much time for reflection—scarce the opportunity to look towards his Danites, which, however, he did—glancing back as if desirous of retreating to them.

"Stan' yar groun'!" shouted the squatter in a tone of menace—"stan' yur groun'! Don't dar to turn away. Ef ye do, ye'll only get the bullet in yur back. Now, confess! or, by the eturnal ——! you hain't another second to sit in that saddle!"

The quick threatening manner in which the speaker grasped his gun, told Stebbins that prevarication would be idle. In hurried speech, he replied:

"You committed no murder, Hickman Holt! I never said you did!"

"No! but you said you would; an' you invented proofs o' it? Confess you invented proofs, an' kep' em over my head like a shadder? Confess that!"

Holt hesitated.

"Quick! or ye're a dead man!"

"I did," muttered the guilty wretch, trembling as he spoke.

"An' the proofs war false?"

"They were false—I confess it."

"Enuf!" cried Holt, taking down his gun. "Enuf for me. An' now, ye cowardly snake, ye may go wi' yur beauties yonder. They'll not like ye a bit the wuss for all that. Ye may go—an' carry yur conscience along wi' ye—if that'll be any comfort to ye. Begone!"

"No!" exclaimed a voice from behind, and at the same time Wingrove was seen stepping out from the rock. "Not yet adzactly. I've got a score to settle wi' the skunk. The man who'd plot that way agin another, hain't ought to live. You may let him off, Hick Holt, but I won't; nor wud you eyther, I reck'n, if you knew—"

"Knew what?" interrupted the squatter.

"What he intended for your daughter."

"He is my daughter's husband," rejoined Holt, in a tone of contrition.

"He ain't nothing o' the kind. The marriage war a sham. He war takin' poor Marian out thar for a diff'rent purpose—an' Lilian too."

"For what purpose?" cried Holt, a light seeming suddenly to break upon his mind.

"To make ——," answered Wingrove hesitatingly. "I can't say the word, Hick Holt, in presence o' the girls—to make wives to the Mormon Prophet—that's what he intended wi' both o' em."

The cry, that, like the neigh of an angry horse, burst from the lips of the squatter, drowned the last words of Wingrove's speech; and simultaneously the crack of a rifle rose upon the air. A cloud of smoke for a moment enveloped Holt and his horse, from the midst of which came a repetition of that wild vengeful cry.

At the same instant, the steed of Stebbins galloped riderless down the valley, while the saint himself was seen stretched face upward upon the sward.

He lay still and lifeless—a purple spot on his forehead shewing where the fatal bullet had entered his brain!

The sisters had just time to shelter themselves behind the rock, when a volley from the Danites was poured upon us. Their shots fell harmlessly around; while ours, fired in return, had been better aimed; and another of these fearful men, dropping out of his saddle, yielded up his life upon the spot. The remaining five, seeing that the day had gone against them, wheeled suddenly round; and galloped back down the gorge, ten times faster than they had ridden up. It was the last we saw of the *Destroying Angels*!

"O my children!" cried Holt in supplicating tone, as he staggered forward, and received both within his outstretched embrace, "will ye—can ye forg' me? O God! I've been a bad father to ye; but I knew not the wickedness o' these people; nor half o' his, till it war too late; an' now—"

"And now, father!" said Marian, interrupting his contrite speech with a consoling smile, "speak not of forgiveness. There is nothing to forgive; and perhaps not much to regret: since the perils we have gone through have proved our faith to one another. We shall go home all the happier, having escaped from so many dangers."

"Ah, Marian, gurl, you don't know all—we hev now no home to go to!"

"The same you ever had, if you will consent to accept it. The old cabin on Mud Creek will hold us all till we can build a bigger one. But no!"—I added, correcting myself—"I see two here who will scarcely feel inclined to share its hospitality. Another cabin, higher up the creek, will be likely to claim them for its tenants."

Marian blushed; while the young backwoodsman, although turning equally red at the allusion, had the courage to stammer out, that he always "thort his cabin war big enough for two."

"Stranger!" said Holt, turning to me, and frankly extending his hand, "I've much to be ashamed o', an' much to thank ye for; but I accept yur kind offer. You bought the land, an' I'd return ye the money, ef it hadn't been all spent. I thort I kud a made up for it, by gieing ye somethin' ye mout a liked better. Now I see I can't even gi' ye that somethin', since it appears to be yours a'ready. Ye've won her, stranger! an' ye've got her. All I kin now do is to say that from the bottom o' my heart I consent to yur keepin' her."

"Thanks—thanks!"

Lilian was mine for ever.

* * * * * The curtain falls upon our drama; and brief must be the epilogue.

To scenes warlike and savage succeeded those of a pacific and civilised character; as the turbulent torrent, debouching from its mountain channel, flows in tranquil current through the alluvion of the level plain.

By our Utah allies, whom we encountered on the following day, we were "outfitted" for recrossing the prairies—the abandoned wagon, with a team of Indian mules, affording a proper means of transport.

Not without regret did we part with the friendly Mexican trapper, and our brave associates, the ex-rifeman and ex-infantry. We had afterwards the gratification to learn that the scalps man survived his terrible mutilation; that under the protection of Peg-leg, he and Sure-shot were taken to the valley of Taos; whence, along with the next migration of "diggers," they proceeded, by the Colorado, to the golden placers of California.

To detail the incidents of our homeward journey,

were a pleasant task for the pen; but the record would scarcely interest the reader. The colossal squatter, silent but cheerful, drove the wagon, and busied himself about the management of his mules. The young backwoodsman and I were thus left free to interchange with our respective 'sweethearts' those phrases of delirious endearment—those glances of exquisite sweetness, that only pass between eyes illumined by the light of a mutual love.

Proverbially sweet is the month after marriage; but the honey-moon, with all its joys, could not have exceeded in bliss those ante-nuptial hours spent by us in recrossing the prairies. Clear as the sky over our heads was the horoscope of our hearts; all doubt and suspicion had passed away; not a shadow lingered upon the horizon of our future, to dim the perfect happiness we enjoyed. In our case, the delight of anticipation could not be enhanced by actual possession: since we had possession already.

We arrived safely in Swampville. In the post-office of that interesting village a letter awaited me, of which 'jet black was de seal.' Under ordinary circumstances, this should have cast a gloom upon my joy; but candour forces me to confess, that a perusal of the contents of that epistle produced upon me an effect altogether the reverse. The letter announced the demise of an octogenarian female relative, whom I had never seen; but who, for a full decade of years beyond the period allotted to the life of man—or woman either—had obstinately persisted in standing betwixt me and a small reversion—so long, indeed, that I had ceased to regard it as an 'expectation.'

It was of no great amount; but arriving just then in the very 'nick o' time,' was doubly welcome; and under its strengthening influence, a large quantity of superfluous timber soon disappeared from the banks of Mud Creek.

Ah! the squatter's clearing, with its zigzag fence, its girdled trees, and white deadwoods! It is no longer recognisable. The log-hut is replaced by a pretentious frame-dwelling, with portico and verandahs—almost a mansion. The little maize-patch, scarcely an acre in extent, is now a splendid plantation, of many fields; in which wave the golden tassels of the Indian corn, the broad leaves of another indigenous vegetable—the aromatic 'Indian weed,' and the gossamer-like florets of the precious cotton-plant. Even the squatter himself you would scarcely recognise, in the respectable old gentleman, who, mounted upon his cob, with a long rifle over his shoulder, rides around, looking after the affairs of the plantation, and picking off the squirrels, who threaten the young corn with their destructive depredations.

It is not the only plantation upon Mud Creek. A little further up the stream, another is met with—almost equally extended, and cultivated in like manner. Need I say who is the owner of this last? Who should it be, but the young backwoodsman—now transformed into a prosperous planter?

The two estates are contiguous, and no jealous fence separates the one from the other. Both extend to that flowery glade, of somewhat sad notoriety, whose bordering woods are still undefiled by the axe. Not there, but in another spot, alike flowery and pleasant, the eye of the soaring eagle, looking from aloft, may see united together a joyous group—the owners of the two plantations—with their young wives, Marian and Lillian. The sisters are still in the full bloom of their incomparable beauty. In neither is the maiden yet subdued into the matron; though each beholds her own type reflected in more than one bright face smiling by her side; while more than one little voice lisps sweetly in her ear that word of fond endearment—the first that falls from human lips.

Ah! beloved Lillian! thine is not a beauty born to blush but for an hour. In my eyes, it can never fade;

but, like the blossom of the citron, seems only the fairer, blooming by the side of its own fruit!

I leave it to other lips to symbol the praises of thy sister—

THE WILD HUNTERES.*

THE END OF THE WILD HUNTERES.

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

THE year ends prosperously: while a long-fettered nation is enjoying, or trying to enjoy, its first-fruits of freedom, and learning the rudiments of self-government; while John Chinaman is counting out a few millions of sycee silver to indemnify the Bull-frog alliance, as an American editor calls the alliance between England and France; while the Registrar-general is preparing for our next decennial census by printing five millions of household schedules—the promoters of art and science, having summed up their proceedings, find that praiseworthy manifestations have been made, and great things accomplished in architecture and engineering, and in the best branches of constructive and decorative art.

The long wished-for centralisation of our metropolitan law-courts is to take place; for the Board of Works will apply to parliament in the coming session for leave to purchase and pull down all the houses between the west end of Fleet Street and Clement's Inn in one direction, and between the Strand and Carey Street on the other, and to build there the proposed new courts, which will thus be close to all the legal haunts in Lincoln's Inn Fields, the Temple, and Chancery Lane. Law should be somewhat less costly when the time now lost by repeated journeys of the lawyers down to Westminster is saved. The scheme involves, moreover, a local improvement, for the locality in question is, with its present plexus of narrow alleys, alike unsavoury and squalid. And what is to become of Temple Bar? That venerable relic cannot be permitted to block the approach to, or mar the appearance of, the edifice wherein Themis and the Lord Chancellor are to sit, and so it must be removed—the new monthly magazine to the contrary, notwithstanding.—Another project is talked of, which, if carried out, will further improve the neighbourhood of the Inns of Court: it is to clear away all the houses between the northern side of Wych Street and the southern side of the Strand, and erect a grand central Metropolitan Hotel on the site. This would abolish Holywell Street; but whether it would also abolish the tenants who furnished the principal occasion for Lord Campbell's act against indecent publications, remains to be seen.—We hear, too, that the 'proper authorities' have determined that the right hand and left hand of the Admiralty shall no longer be half a mile apart, as hitherto, to the detriment of business, but that the left hand shall remove from Somerset House to join its fellow in Whitehall.

The Institute of Naval Architects, which was started last March, are about to publish their first volume of *Transactions*: we shall be glad to see them discussing some of the important questions which their title involves, for, as may be seen by Admiral Moorsom's reports to the British Association, we are still unable to build a ship of war to answer the requirements of progressing science. Guns and gunnery are now so much improved, that even our best war-ships are too imperfect for their armament. And yet we spend more than a million a month on our navy. The fact is, that the new question which has arisen out of the new circumstances—namely, how to build a war-ship that shall be *steady* and *expansive*, as well as *fast*—is one which a naval

* Right of translation reserved.

architect knows scarcely anything about. Admiral Moorsom is occupying himself therewith; and a cargo-steamer, built under his supervision, is expected ere long to afford data on the question. This steamer is to carry pigs between Ireland and the Clyde. To insure profitable transport, the grunters should be conveyed as clean and dry, and with as little knocking about as possible; if, therefore, she sits steady on the water, the object will be accomplished. The steadiness here implied is absence of the rolling motion from side to side; that is the result to be achieved, for neither gunners nor merchants complain of the gradual lengthwise rise and fall of a vessel as she mounts and descends the waves.

The rifle invented by Major-general Boileau, and constructed by Turner of Birmingham, excels, as we hear, all others, even the Whitworth, and at any range from five hundred yards up to fifteen hundred. It has a further advantage in weighing not more than nine pounds and a quarter.—Mr William Fairbairn, of Manchester, has had a recognition of his valuable investigations into the action of steam, and the means of preventing boiler-explosions, by a gift of one of the two royal medals which the Queen places once a year at the disposal of the Royal Society.—At a recent meeting of this society, Professor Crace-Calvert announced an interesting chemical discovery: that cast iron is convertible into plumbago. The professor soaks cubes of cast iron in weak acid—vinegar being the most suitable—until the iron is dissolved out, and the carbon remains. By this process the cubes lose in weight, but not in dimensions, and retain their form unaltered; but the quality is changed, and it is an easy to draw lines with one of them as with a lump of plumbago. Artists and others who have been uneasy as to failure in the supply of lead for pencils, may now dismiss their apprehensions, for while cast iron is to be had, the desired material will be available. Strictly speaking, it is not carbon, but a cyanide of carbon, which remains after dissolution of the iron.

Mr Robert Mallet, who has spent some years in experiments and investigations into the phenomena of earthquakes, completed them on November 23 by the explosion of six tons of powder in the hill at Holyhead from which stone is taken for the breakwater. The result favoured his wishes, for the mercury in the seismometer, or shock-measuring instrument, was seen to oscillate, though a mile and a quarter distant from the focus of the shock. From this Mr Mallet obtains data for comparison with observed natural shocks. Had he been at Copiapo on October 5, he might have felt and tested 116 shocks within twenty-four hours. The quarrymen at Holyhead reckon that for every pound of powder blasted, they should get on the average two and a half tons of stone; hence the prodigious quantity that would be thrown down by a blast of six tons may be easily calculated. Prodigious though it be, the demand is so great for the breakwater, which has a width of 350 feet at the base, that within two weeks it may all be flung into the sea. We have heard that stone quarried in this way costs a fraction under ninepence a ton.

The Photographic Society have distributed among their members copies of a print representing a picturesque ruin in an effective style such as would be taken for wood engraving. But according to the epigraph, it is 'absolutely untouched by the graver,' and is a new achievement of photography, being, as we are informed, produced solely by the action of light. The inventor is Mr Paul Pretsch: his process is as yet a secret; but so far as is known, it consists in taking an impression on a sheet of some glutinous preparation, from which an electrotype copper-plate is afterwards taken, and from this the picture is printed as from a wood-block. The result seems almost wonderful: anything that can be photographed is reproducible in the same way; hence there would

appear to be no limit to the publication of copies of the best specimens of art.—Mr Malone has repeated Nièpce St Victor's experiments on light, and concludes that the eminent French chemist has mistaken his results.—Mr Mercer, of Accrington, has discovered a way of preparing calico for photographic impressions, which being dyed with a madder colour, are fast pictures that cannot be washed out. We have seen portraits thus produced which look as well as those on paper; and it may be that some ingenious persons will find in this discovery a new mode of marking linen, by photographing the owner's portrait thereon, instead of writing or working his initials. Possibly the ingenuity may extend to fancy waistcoat-patterns, in which faces shall be the chief attraction; and when a man can have his portrait large as life in the middle of his pocket-handkerchief, warranted not to wash out, the light-fingered professors will perhaps hesitate to try their skill on 'wipes.' Another discovery of Mr Mercer's is worth notice: he dips calico into a certain kind of cold bath, whereby it undergoes a transformation somewhat similar to that of paper into parchment, and acquires a stiffness which no heat will afterwards soften. What will 'outfitters' say to this?—a material for collars and wristbands which will not become limp!

While meteorologists are summing up their returns for the twelvemonth, the Registrar-general has published his for the quarter, wherein is satisfactorily shewn that the much-censured season, with all its wind, rain, and storms, has been favourable to health, the deaths having been fewer by many thousands than in former seasons, which were described as the very perfection of fine weather. Henceforth, it will be well to remember that abundance of rain is not the unmitigated evil that many have thought it.

In a former *Month*, we called attention to Dr Stenhouse's application of charcoal as a material for respirators, and as a disinfectant, an application which time and experience have abundantly verified. Many of our readers know that the ventilation of sewers is a question which has long been discussed and never brought to a satisfactory conclusion; they know also that the numerous gratings by which sewer-gases escape and rise into the streets are offensive and obnoxious to health, especially in narrow streets and crowded neighbourhoods. This is an acknowledged evil, but the sewers must be ventilated, and the more their contents are oxidized by admission of air, the more harmless do they become. As the openings must not be closed, and ought indeed to be multiplied, it occurred to one of the sanitary officers in the city to adopt the principle of Dr Stenhouse's charcoal respirator, and having fitted a series of charcoal filters into the openings that lead from the sewers to the surface of the streets, he finds the solution of the important question, for the noxious gases are completely neutralised. Of course, special precautions have to be taken in the preparation of the shafts, and the filters must be kept dry, or the charcoal will cease to act, but of the result there is no doubt: the unpleasant smell is entirely destroyed. During the past two years, many parts of London, within the city, have been thus purified. The openings need not necessarily be in roadways, they may be led up through the lamp-pillars, or between party-walls, or into chimneys. A west-end engineer has tried the same plan in parts of Westminster, and with the like success; it is adopted in the new sewage-works at West Ham; it has been applied at Bowood, the seat of Lord Lansdowne, and we hear talk of its introduction into Glasgow. Its general adoption can only be a question of time, for charcoal is the cheapest remedy yet thought of for the prevalent evil; it is applicable at outfalls as well as along the course of sewers, and it kept dry retains its efficacy for many years. London, with its hundreds of miles of sewers, would require 25,000 filters.

Professors Bunsen and Kirchoff, of Heidelberg, to whom modern chemistry is largely indebted, have lately made a discovery which, in the vast field it opens for further research, may be ranked as the most famous of the year. It is a method of chemical analysis by means of the spectrum. Most readers know that by spectrum is meant the rainbow beam reflected from a glass prism exposed to sunlight: it is producible also by the light of a lamp, and chemists and opticians have at times experimented on the changes that appear when different substances are burned within the lamp-flame. For delicate observations, it is essential that the spectrum be not too bright; much less bright, in fact, than that thrown by the solar beam; and Bunsen's lamp, which, burning hydrogen gas, gives a feeble illumination with great heat, is the best for the purpose. Now let us imagine the apparatus prepared, and the spectrum thrown into a box from which daylight is excluded. The professors above mentioned take less than a grain of chloride of sodium, mix it with a small portion of milk-sugar, and burn it in the corner of their laboratory furthest from the lamp. An eye keeps watch on the inside of the box, and presently when the vapour has diffused itself, and meets the flame, a bright yellow line is seen to cross the spectrum, and remain visible for some minutes. This is called the sodium line, for whenever sodium is present in the atmosphere of the lamp-flame, and however combined with other substances, that particular line never fails to appear, even if the quantity of sodium be not more than one-twenty-millionth of a grain. It is found that each metallic base and metallic earth has its own peculiar line or lines: lithium shews a faint yellow and sharp red line; potassium, a red and a violet; strontium, four lines—two red, one orange, one blue; calcium, a green and an orange line; barium, more than a dozen lines, which may be described as one-half green, the other orange. And as with the sodium, each substance is always recognisable by its own peculiar line or lines, however infinitesimal the quantity tested. In fact, it would appear that even the ultimate atom could hardly escape this mode of analysis.

While carrying on their experiments, the professors noticed certain lines on the spectrum for which they could not account, produced by none of the substances enumerated above, but by some substance to them unknown. Considering hereupon, they ventured to assert that there existed in nature a fourth alkaline metal hitherto undiscovered. If they predicted its discovery, their prediction has been recently verified—as was that of the astronomers who predicted the discovery of Neptune—and they now announce that they have discovered the new substance in notable though minute quantity, and they propose for it the name of spectrum. Judging from present appearances, Nature has not been lavish of this remarkable metal, for they had to operate on 800 hundredweights of the water of a mineral spring (the mother-water), to get—only fifty grains.

What with microscope and spectrum, there is an entirely new field of research opening in geology as well as chemistry. Already lithium is unexpectedly found to occur 'most widely throughout nature'; in quartz, felspar, spring-water, Atlantic water, seaweeds, the waste waters of chemical works, grapes, vine-leaves, sundry cereals, and tobacco. Hold the burnt end of a cigar in the lamp-flame, and the sodium, lithium, and potassium lines appear on the spectrum. Analysis of limestones shews their composition to be very different from what has been supposed by geologists. And as regards sodium, it prevails so universally throughout the atmosphere, that on beating out the dust from a book in any part of a room, no sooner does it enter the lamp-flame, than the sodium line appears, and it is always to be seen when the atmosphere is agitated.

We must here leave this subject, but hope to return to it on a future occasion, for it is pregnant with great results. At their anniversary meeting on St Andrew's Day, the Royal Society, who had already elected Professor Bunsen one of their Foreign Members, awarded him the Copley medal—the highest honour in their gift.

NEW-YEAR'S DAY.

How shall we welcome in the new-born Year?
Not with the ringing voice of mirth alone,
But with a mingled melody—a tone
Of grateful joy, but mixed with reverent fear.
This smiling child of Time may grow severe
Matured to manhood; ours the blessed employ
To change the grief he owes the poor to joy,
In the one baptism of a brother's tear;
And may we—like the Wise who came from far,
Bearing the treasures of their Eastern clime,
To celebrate the dawning of His star
Who proved the heir and first-born of all time—
Bring gifts to brighten eyes with sorrow dim.
Who gives unto His poor, gives also unto Him.

R. R.

On Saturday, the 5th of January 1861, will be commenced in this Journal,

A STORY,

ENTITLED

THE FAMILY SCAPEGRACE.

BY JAMES PAYN,

Author of 'The Bateman Household,' &c. &c.

To be continued every week until completed.

The present number of the Journal completes the Fourteenth Volume; a title-page and index prepared for it may be had of the publishers and their agents.

END OF FOURTEENTH VOLUME.



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